

and said product fulfillment items over said network to said merchant computer;

said merchant computer being programmed to receive said digital advertisements and product fulfillment items over said network, to receive over said network a request for a digital advertisement from a user, to cause said digital advertisement to be sent to said user over said network, to receive over said network from said user a product request message identifying an advertised product, to receive an access message over said network created by [a] said payment computer, and to cause said product to be sent to said user in accordance with a product fulfillment item corresponding to said product and based upon receipt by the merchant computer of the access message.

5. (Twice amended) A method of operating a merchant computer in a network-based sales system comprising a merchant database that comprises a plurality of digital advertisements and a plurality of respective product fulfillment items, at least one creation computer for creating said merchant database, and at least one merchant computer for causing said digital advertisements to be transmitted to a user and for causing advertised products to be transmitted to said user, and at least one payment computer, said creation computer, [and] said merchant computer, and said payment computer being interconnected by a public packet switched computer network, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving, at said merchant computer, said digital advertisements and said product fulfillment items, said digital advertisements and said product fulfillment items having been

transmitted over said network to said merchant computer by said creation computer, said merchant database comprising said digital advertisements and said product fulfillment items having been created by said creation computer;

receiving over said network a request for a digital advertisement from a user;

causing said digital advertisement to be sent to said user over said network;

receiving over said network from said user a product request message identifying an advertised product;

receiving over said network an access message created by [a] said payment computer; and

causing said product to be sent to said user in accordance with a product fulfillment item corresponding to said product and based upon receipt by the merchant computer of the access message.

6. (Twice amended) A hypertext statement system, comprising:

a client computer for operation by a client user; and
[one or more] a plurality of server computers for operation by a server user;

said client computer and said server computers being interconnected by a public packet switched computer network;

at least one of said server computers being programmed to record information pertaining to purchase transaction records in a database, each of said purchase transaction records comprising a product description, and to [transmit] cause a

statement document comprising said purchase transaction records to be transmitted to said client computer over said network;

said client computer being programmed to display said product descriptions, to receive a request from said client user to display a product corresponding to a product description displayed by said client computer, and to cause a product hypertext link derived from a purchase transaction record to be activated;

at least one of said server computers, other than a server computer that transmitted said statement document to said client computer, being programmed to respond to activation of said product hypertext link by causing said product to be sent to said client computer over said network.

10. (Twice amended) A method of operating a server computer in a hypertext statement system comprising a client computer for operation by a client user, and [one or more] a plurality of server computers for operation by a server user, said client computer and said server computers being interconnected by a public packet switched computer network, said method comprising the steps of:

recording, at one of said server computers, information pertaining to purchase transaction records in a database, each of said purchase transaction records comprising a product description; and

[transmitting] causing a statement document comprising said purchase transaction records to be transmitted to said client computer over said network;

said client computer being programmed to display said product descriptions, to receive a request from said client user to display a product corresponding to a product description displayed by said client computer, and to cause a product hypertext link derived from a purchase transaction record to be activated;

at least one of said server computers, other than a server computer that transmitted said statement document to said client computer, being programmed to respond to activation of said product hypertext link by causing said product to be sent to said client computer over said network.

11. (Twice amended) A network payment system, comprising:

at least one buyer computer for operation by a user desiring to buy a product; and

at least one payment computer for processing payment messages from said buyer computer;

said buyer computer, [and] said payment computer, and a merchant computer being interconnected by a public packet switched computer network;

said buyer computer being programmed to cause a payment message to be sent to said payment computer over said network;

said payment computer being programmed to receive said payment message, to cause an access message to be created for transmission over said network to [a] said merchant computer to enable said user to access said product upon verification by said merchant computer that said access message was created by said

payment computer, and to record information pertaining to a purchase transaction record in said settlement database;

said buyer computer being programmed to cause a request for a purchase transaction [records] record to be sent to said payment computer over said network; and

said payment computer being programmed to receive said request for said purchase transaction [records] record and to cause a document derived from said purchase transaction [records] record to be sent to said buyer computer over said network.

12. (Twice amended) A method of operating a payment computer in a network payment system comprising at least one buyer computer for operation by a user desiring to buy a product, and at least one payment computer for processing payment messages from said buyer computer, and at least one merchant computer, said buyer computer, said payment computer, and said merchant computer being interconnected by a public packet switched computer network, said method comprising the steps of:

receiving, at said payment computer, a payment message that said buyer computer has caused to be sent to said payment computer over said network;

causing an access message to be created for transmission to a merchant computer over said network to enable said user to access said product upon verification by said merchant computer that said access message was created by said payment computer;

recording information pertaining to a purchase transaction record in said settlement database;

receiving over said network a request for a purchase transaction [records] record that said buyer computer has caused to be sent to said payment computer; and

causing a document derived from said purchase transaction [records] record to be sent to said buyer computer over said network.

15. (Amended) A hypertext statement system, comprising:

a client computer for operation by a client user; and one or more server computers for operation by a server user;

the client computer and the server computers being interconnected by a public packet switched computer network;

at least one of the server computers being programmed to record information pertaining to purchase transaction records in a database, [each of the purchase transaction records comprising a product description,] and to transmit a statement document comprising the purchase transaction records to the client computer over the network;

the client computer being programmed to display the statement document [product descriptions, to receive a request from the client user to display a product corresponding to a product description displayed by the client computer, to cause a product hypertext link derived from a purchase transaction record to be activated,] to receive a request from the client user to display transaction details corresponding to a [product description] portion of the statement document displayed by the client computer, and to cause a transaction detail hypertext link

corresponding to the [product description] portion of the statement document to be activated;

at least one of the server computers being programmed [to respond to activation of the product hypertext link by causing the product to be sent to the client computer and] to respond to activation of the transaction detail hypertext link by transmitting the transaction details to the client computer over the network as a transaction detail document.

16. (Amended) A method of operating a server computer in a hypertext statement system comprising a client computer for operation by a client user, and one or more server computers for operation by a server user, the client computer and the server computers being interconnected by a public packet switched computer network, the method comprising the steps of:

recording, at one of the server computers, information pertaining to purchase transaction records in a database, [each of the purchase transaction records comprising a product description]; and

transmitting a statement document comprising the purchase transaction records to the client computer over the network;

the client computer being programmed to display the [product descriptions] statement document, [to receive a request from the client user to display a product corresponding to a product description displayed by the client computer, to cause a product hypertext link derived from a purchase transaction record to be activated,] to receive a request from the client user to display transaction details corresponding to a [product

description] portion of the statement document displayed by the client computer, and to cause a transaction detail hypertext link corresponding to the [product description] portion of the statement document to be activated;

[at least one of the server computers being programmed to respond to activation of the product hypertext link by causing the product to be sent to the client computer, and] at least one of the server computers being programmed to respond to activation of the transaction detail hypertext link by transmitting the transaction details to the client computer over the network as a transaction detail document.

17. (Amended) A network-based sales system, comprising:

at least one buyer computer for operation by a user desiring to buy products;

at least one shopping cart computer; and

a shopping cart database connected to the shopping cart computer;

the buyer computer and the shopping cart computer being interconnected by a public packet switched computer network;

the buyer computer being programmed to receive a plurality of requests from a user to add a plurality of respective products to a shopping cart in the shopping cart database, and, in response to the requests to add the products, to send a plurality of respective shopping cart messages over the network to the shopping cart computer each of which comprises a product identifier identifying one of the plurality of products and at least one of which comprises a universal resource locator;

the shopping cart computer being programmed to receive the plurality of shopping cart messages, to modify the shopping cart in the shopping cart database to reflect the plurality of requests to add the plurality of products to the shopping cart, and to cause a payment message associated with the shopping cart to be created, the payment message comprising a universal resource locator; and

the buyer computer being programmed to receive a request from the user to purchase the plurality of products added to the shopping cart and to cause the payment message to be activated to initiate a payment transaction for the plurality of products added to the shopping cart;

the shopping cart being a stored representation of a collection of products, the shopping cart database being a database of stored representations of collections of products, and the shopping cart computer being a computer that modifies the stored representations of collections of products in the database.

18. (Amended) A method of operating a shopping cart computer in a public packet switched computer network comprising at least one buyer computer for operation by a user desiring to buy products, at least one shopping cart computer, and a shopping cart database connected to the shopping cart computer, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving, at the shopping cart computer, a plurality of shopping cart messages sent over the network to the shopping cart computer by the buyer computer in response to receipt of a plurality of requests from a user to add a plurality of

respective products to a shopping cart in the shopping cart database, each of the shopping cart messages comprising a product identifier identifying one of the plurality of products and at least one of which comprises a universal resource locator;

modifying the shopping cart in the shopping cart database to reflect the plurality of requests to add the plurality of products to the shopping cart; and

causing a payment message associated with the shopping cart to be created, the payment message comprising a universal resource locator;

the buyer computer being programmed to receive a request from the user to purchase the plurality of products added to the shopping cart and to cause the payment message to be activated to initiate a payment transaction for the plurality of products added to the shopping cart;

the shopping cart being a stored representation of a collection of products, the shopping cart database being a database of stored representations of collections of products, and the shopping cart computer being a computer that modifies the stored representations of collections of products in the database.

31. (Amended) A network-based sales system, comprising:

at least one buyer computer for operation by a user desiring to buy a product;

at least one merchant computer; and

at least one payment computer;

the buyer computer, the merchant computer, and the payment computer being interconnected by a public packet switched computer network;

the buyer computer being programmed to receive a request from a user for purchasing a product, and to cause a payment message to be sent over the network to the payment computer;

the payment computer being programmed to receive the payment message, and, if purchase of the product by the user has not been previously recorded in a settlement database, to cause the user to be charged for the product and to create a new record in the settlement database reflecting purchase of the product by the user, to cause an access message to be created, and to cause the access message to be sent over the network to the merchant computer; and

the merchant computer being programmed to receive the access message and to cause the user to receive the product.

33. (Amended) A method of operating a payment computer in a public packet switched computer network comprising at least one buyer computer for operation by a user desiring to buy a product, at least one merchant computer, and at least one payment computer, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving, at the payment computer, a payment message that the buyer computer has caused to be sent over the network to the payment computer in response to a request from a user for purchasing a product, and, if purchase of the product by the user has not been previously recorded in a settlement database, causing the user to be charged for the product and creating a new

record in the settlement database reflecting purchase of the product by the user;

causing an access message to be created; and

causing the access message to be sent over the network to the merchant computer, the merchant computer being programmed to receive the access message and to cause the user to receive the product.

35. (Amended) A network-based sales system, comprising:

at least one buyer computer for operation by a user desiring to buy products;

at least one shopping cart computer; and

a shopping cart database connected to the shopping cart computer;

the buyer computer and the shopping cart computer being interconnected by a public packet switched computer network;

the buyer computer being programmed to receive a plurality of requests from a user to add a plurality of respective products to a shopping cart in the shopping cart database, and, in response to the requests to add the products, to send a plurality of respective shopping cart messages over the network to the shopping cart computer each of which comprises a product identifier identifying one of the plurality of products;

the shopping cart computer being programmed to receive the plurality of shopping cart messages, and to modify the shopping cart in the shopping cart database to reflect the plurality of requests to add the plurality of products to the shopping cart; and

the buyer computer being programmed to receive a request from the user to purchase the plurality of products added to the shopping cart and to cause a payment message to be activated to initiate a payment transaction for the plurality of products added to the shopping cart;

the shopping cart being a stored representation of a collection of products, the shopping cart database being a database of stored representations of collections of products, and the shopping cart computer being a computer that modifies the stored representations of collections of products in the database.

36. (Amended) A method of operating a shopping cart computer in a public packet switched computer network comprising at least one buyer computer for operation by a user desiring to buy products, at least one shopping cart computer, and a shopping cart database connected to the shopping cart computer, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving, at the shopping cart computer, a plurality of shopping cart messages sent over the network to the shopping cart computer by the buyer computer in response to receipt of a plurality of requests from a user to add a plurality of respective products to a shopping cart in the shopping cart database, each of the shopping cart messages comprising a product identifier identifying one of the plurality of products; and

modifying the shopping cart in the shopping cart database to reflect the plurality of requests to add the plurality of products to the shopping cart;

the buyer computer being programmed to receive a request from the user to purchase the plurality of products added to the shopping cart and to cause a payment message to be activated to initiate a payment transaction for the plurality of products added to the shopping cart;

the shopping cart being a stored representation of a collection of products, the shopping cart database being a database of stored representations of collections of products, and the shopping cart computer being a computer that modifies the stored representations of collections of products in the database.

Please add the following new claims:

37. A network-based sales system, comprising:

a merchant database comprising a plurality of digital advertisements and a plurality of respective product fulfillment items;

at least one creation computer for creating the merchant database; and

at least one merchant computer for causing the digital advertisements to be transmitted to a user and for causing advertised products to be transmitted to the user;

the creation computer and the merchant computer being interconnected by a public packet switched computer network;

the creation computer being programmed to create the merchant database, and to transmit the digital advertisements and the product fulfillment items over the network to the merchant computer;

the merchant computer being programmed to receive the digital advertisements and product fulfillment items over the network, to receive over the network a request for a digital advertisement from a user, to cause the digital advertisement to be sent to the user over the network, to receive over the network from the user a product request message identifying an advertised product, and to cause the product to be sent to the user in accordance with a product fulfillment item corresponding to the product;

at least a portion of the digital advertisements transmitted by the creation computer to the merchant computer over the network being authenticated by at least one digital signature.

38. A method of operating a merchant computer in a network-based sales system comprising a merchant database that comprises a plurality of digital advertisements and a plurality of respective product fulfillment items, at least one creation computer for creating the merchant database, and at least one merchant computer for causing the digital advertisements to be transmitted to a user and for causing advertised products to be transmitted to the user, the creation computer and the merchant computer being interconnected by a public packet switched computer network, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving, at the merchant computer, the digital advertisements and the product fulfillment items, the digital advertisements and the product fulfillment items having been transmitted over the network to the merchant computer by the creation computer, the merchant database comprising the digital